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## Rotary Day celebrates partnerships for service



Posted on April 23, 2019 on rotaryservice by Past President Linus Okezie EZE, Rotary Community Corps, Service Chair for District 9142 in Nigeria



The Rotary Club of Eziamma-Sunrise located in Nigeria partnered with the Rotary Community Corps of Amaokwe Item to host a Rotary Day to celebrate the opening of the Amaokwe Item Women Skill Acquisition and Development Centre. The celebration also offered medical services to community members, including malaria testing and access to medicinal treatment, distribution of mosquito nets, and eye screenings.



This project, a joint effort between the local Rotary club, Rotary Community Corps, and international partner the Rotary Club of North Stockton in the U.S. received support from The Rotary Foundation through a global grant.

## Why Vaccines Matter In 2019

Posted on Apr 24, 2019, by Caryl M. Stern and John Hewko Brand Contributors, UNICEF USA

Misinformation and distrust are fueling vaccine hesitancy, and vaccine-preventable diseases like measles are on the rise as a result.



Held by her mother, Inna, 1-year-old Dana didn't cry when she received her first dose of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine at Children's Polyclinic No. 1 in Obolon district, Kyiv, Ukraine in April 2018. © UNICEF/UN0201055/KREPKIH

Most people would assume that trust in vaccines is a given. Vaccines are a safe and effective defense against deadly diseases, as underscored every year by the World Health Organization (WHO), which estimates that **immunization saves the lives of 2.5 million people annually**. And if broad strokes aren't persuasive enough, then take the success of the polio vaccine as a case in point: The linchpin of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative's (GPEI) efforts, the polio vaccine has helped serve the public-private partnership (comprised of Rotary International, UNICEF, the WHO, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) in saving **an estimated 18 million children** from becoming paralyzed since 1988.

These staggering numbers make a very convincing development-based argument, as well as a compelling economic case for vaccines.

**"Vaccine-preventable diseases including measles and diphtheria are on the rise, with measles cases up by 30 percent worldwide."**

An analysis of 10 vaccines for "94 low- and middle-income countries estimated that an investment of \$34 billion for the immunization programs resulted in savings of \$586 billion in reducing costs of illness and \$1.53 trillion when broader economic benefits were included." Conversely, **100 million people are pushed into poverty every year by medical costs**, costs that could be avoided in part by vaccination against preventable diseases.

Despite the myriad societal and economic reasons to support vaccines, they also serve as a litmus test for our society's level of trust in its

institutions. This is reflected in the fact that vaccine hesitancy is regarded by the WHO as one of the *top ten threats to global health in 2019*. Our attitude towards vaccines is as critical as the infectious disease epidemics themselves in determining global public health. And the trends in vaccine hesitancy are concerning. Vaccine-preventable diseases including measles and diphtheria are on the rise, with measles cases up by 30 percent worldwide. It's no surprise that in the US, a 2018 *study* identified a nearly 70 percent uptick in documented parental/guardian vaccine refusals for children born in 2013, compared to children born in 2010.



*A young girl has her finger marked after receiving her polio vaccination in Angoram, East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea in March 2019. © UNICEF/UN0292505/HOLT*

As incidents of vaccine refusal rise, we ask ourselves what can be done about the discrepancy between the proven science and the reality of anti-vaccine behavior. Ultimately, answers may be found in polio and the way we have taken on the deadly and paralyzing disease, which once terrorized America, over the last three decades.

*"As incidents of vaccine refusal rise, we ask ourselves what can be done about the discrepancy between the proven science behind vaccines and the reality of anti-vaccine behavior."*

Since establishing the GPEI, Rotary, UNICEF and partners are closing in on one of the greatest public health achievements in history: polio eradication. Polio will become only the second human disease, after smallpox, to be banished to our past.

Our experience in this effort has taught us valuable lessons in taking vaccines out of laboratories and doctors' offices, and into the field to reach communities far and wide. Surprisingly, we have learned that education alone is not enough to convince people to accept a safe and effective vaccine. Recent *studies* on the psychology of vaccination indicate that while education reduces misbelieve, it also reduces the likelihood that people already uneasy about the vaccine would plan to get it.



*Female frontline health workers go door-to-door to vaccinate children against polio in Islamabad, Pakistan in May 2017. © UNICEF/UN0139374/ZAID*

To overcome refusals when they occur, the GPEI focuses on responding to local needs and human capacity building. For example, in Pakistan, *80 percent* of frontline health workers in the polio eradication effort are women, as females are more trusted to enter households and interact with mothers and children to deliver the polio vaccine. Polio workers also deliver other valuable interventions to complement polio vaccination, such as health education and services for antenatal care, routine immunization, maternal health, and child nutrition monitoring and counseling.

*"Vaccine-preventable diseases such as polio can have serious and potentially life-threatening consequences but the real infection at stake is misinformation and mistrust."*

Additionally, as insight into the precise reasons for vaccine refusal in specific regions has been clearer, the GPEI has adapted its strategies appropriately, such as engaging religious and community leaders to enlist their support, and by building public trust in health services.

Vaccine-preventable diseases such as polio can have serious and potentially life-threatening consequences, but the real infection at stake is misinformation and mistrust. As we focus our efforts on protecting vulnerable groups, including children, against the spread of disease, we must ultimately bridge scientific innovation with a personalized approach. If we do this for vaccines, it will provide a blueprint for overcoming impasses in other global health challenges for which we have the science, but not yet the unanimous support, to effect transformative change.

*Please support UNICEF's efforts to vaccinate every child, everywhere.*

*For over 70 years, UNICEF has been putting children first, working to protect their rights and provide the assistance and services they need to survive and thrive. With a presence in 190 countries and territories, UNICEF has helped save more children's lives than any other humanitarian organization in the world.*

### **Sushil Gupta resigns as RI president-nominee**



My Fellow Rotarians,

It is with a heavy heart that I announce my resignation as the president-nominee of Rotary International. While it was my dream to serve as your president, my health prevents me from giving my absolute best to you and the office of the president at this time. I believe Rotary deserves nothing less than that from those elected to represent this great organization of ours.

I have made this difficult decision after much soul searching and conferring with my family.

This is not only a disappointment for us, but I am also keenly aware that this will be a disappointment for many Rotarians in India who were so proud to see someone from our country again named as president. I know that this is what is best for Rotary International.

I have been a Rotarian for more than 40 years and it has given me everything I could ask for. I can think of no higher honor than to have been selected by the Nominating Committee as president of Rotary for the 2020-21 Rotary year. I will continue to proudly serve as a Rotary member and pursue some major initiatives that I wanted to accomplish during my year as president, because I know that we are poised to achieve more great things in the future.

I wish nothing but the best to the candidate who succeeds me as president and thank you all for the support and encouragement you have shown me in the past year.

*-Sushil Gupta, 26-Apr-2019*

### **Selecting a new president-nominee**

Following the announced resignation of president-nominee Sushil Gupta due to health reasons, the 2018-19 Nominating Committee for

RI President will convene electronically to select a new president-nominee. The goal is to conclude the selection process no later than Friday, 10 May 2019.

If no challenges to the nomination are received by 31 May 2019, RI President Barry Rassin will declare the selection of the Nominating Committee to be the new president-nominee.

When the new president-nominee is selected, an announcement will be posted to Rotary.org.

26-Apr-2019

### Board of Trustees Statement

On 22 April, the Rotary Foundation Board of Trustees replaced Trustee Ron D. Burton as chair of the Board of Trustees, effective immediately. The trustees elected Trustee Vice Chair Brenda Cressey to serve as the new chair for the remainder of the Rotary year, ending 30 June 2019.

The trustees determined that actions taken by Trustee Burton were in opposition to an earlier decision by the Board of Trustees, which made his continued role as chair untenable. His term as trustee continues through 30 June 2019.

While it is unfortunate that today's decision was necessary, the trustees recognize and appreciate Trustee Burton's extensive service and contributions to Rotary and The Rotary Foundation.

22-Apr-2019

### 2020-22 Directors-nominee announced

President Barry Rassin declared the following Rotarians to be the directors-nominee from those Zones 2, 9, 13A, 17B, 21B, 25B, 28, and 33 for the 2020-22 Board of Directors. They will be elected at the 2019 Hamburg convention.

**Zone 2:** Katsuhiko Tatsuno of Rotary club of Tokyo-West, Tokyo, Japan

**Zone: 9:** Surgeon Chi-Tien Liu of Rotary club of Yangmei, Taiwan

**Zone: 13A:** Roger Lhors of the Rotary club of Pont-Audemer, France

**Zone: 17B:** Virpi Honkala of the Rotary club of Raahe, Finland

**Zone: 21B:** Aikaterini Kotsali-Papadimitriou of the Rotary club of Pendeli, Greece

**Zone: 25B:** Susan C. Howe of the Rotary club of Space Center (Houston), Texas, USA

**Zone: 28:** Valarie K. Wafer of the Rotary club of Collingwood and South Georgian Bay, Ontario, Canada

**Zone: 33:** Peter R. Kyle of the Rotary club of Capitol Hill (Washington, DC), DC, USA

15-Apr-2019

### Pilgrimage produces project for peace

Posted on April 23, 2019 by Magdalena Zurita, Rotary Peace Fellow, International Christian University, Japan, 2016-18



#### Rotary Peace Fellow Magdalena Zurita on the Via Francigena

In May of 2018, I completed my master's studies as a Peace Fellow at International Christian University in Japan. As I waited for the graduation ceremonies, I pondered where I should put everything I had just learned into practice. I was awakened one morning with a new and unexpected thought – traveling. And the word “Tuscany” resounded in my head.

Intrigued, I contacted a friend in Italy who suggested I should consider walking the Via Francigena, a thousand-year-old path that

has been traveled by thousands of pilgrims since the Middle Ages. As I researched and read more about this ancient path, it seemed the perfect place to think and find answers. So after graduation, I made the necessary preparations and embarked on my trip.

#### The Via Francigena

The Via Francigena begins at the San Bernardo Pass, 2,000 meters above sea level and 1,000 kilometers from Rome. My trusty 7-kilogram backpack and I set out, walking between 18 and 34 kilometers a day. I walked through towns, cities, vineyards and forests. I passed over mountains and through plains, enjoying sunny days and enduring cold, cloudy days. I slept in abbeys, parishes and other lodgings. At each new point, I put a seal in my pilgrim passport. Sometimes I walked with others. But other times, I walked alone; contemplating my virtues and flaws, hopes and dreams. As I progressed, I got stronger and was able to increase my pace. I relished the surprises: laughter and singing with other pilgrims; sharing pasta and Italian espressos; and the gift of water from strangers who seemed to appear out of nowhere when I had nothing to drink.

Always, I remembered the great dream that had taken me to Japan, to work for a fairer and more united world. And day by day, I connected that dream with the thousands of memories and ideas that sprouted in my mind from my studies on promoting peace and building partnerships. Step by step, I was building my next path.

#### Meeting with the pope

Finally, my backpack and I arrived in Rome. And I received a unique gift: an unforgettable opportunity to meet Pope Francis. New discoveries also started to emerge. I began to understand my life as a path that is built, step-by-step, between ups and downs. I began to value “the internal walk” with meditations and daily prayers. I forged my “outward” path by promoting strategic partnerships and supporting humanitarian and environmental projects from more than 10 organizations in Argentina, Peru and Italy.



#### Zurita meets Pope Francis at the end of her pilgrimage.

Little by little, this built the foundation for an endeavor I call Suyai – “Hope” in the language of the Mapuche people indigenous to Patagonia. The Suyai Project serves as an accelerator for peace projects through the promotion of strategic partnerships between individuals and institutions committed to at-risk people and natural areas. This new path brings me closer to my dream that would not have been possible without Rotary International: the organization that believed in me, contributed to my education, and inspired me to walk for peace. Let's keep walking!

Adapted with permission from the Suyai Project

## You will never be the same after a Rotary Youth Exchange

Posted on April 26, 2019 by Xolisile Sithole, former Rotary Youth Exchange student to Canada



The author, third from left, on her Rotary Youth Exchange in Thunder Bay, Canada

It has been more than eight years since I embarked on a Rotary Youth Exchange to Thunder Bay, Canada, from South Africa. In many ways, it still seems like yesterday. It was an incredibly big year for me, having finished high school and qualified for university, and it remains one of my most treasured memories.

Since I was little, I had always been involved with Rotary, as my mother was liaison of her school's Interact club. Many Saturdays were spent volunteering, whether I wanted to or not. Despite that, I learned to love service and joined the Interact club in my high school. I invested time and poured my heart into the club and served as president my final year.

After high school, I did not want to go to university right away. But I needed to do something as my parents threatened to make me pay rent if I just stayed at home during my "gap year." Luckily, our host club, the Rotary Club of Azalea, encouraged me to apply for a Rotary Youth Exchange.

### Arriving in Canada

I knew deep down the opportunity was going to change my life. But even that was an understatement. I come from a humble family in South African and it was truly a gift that the Rotary Club of arranged to fund my travels.

From the first day I arrived in Canada, hosted by the Rotary Club of Lakehead, I knew it was going to be nothing like South Africa. I instantly noticed the cleanliness of the city. The people were so kind and welcoming. Canada has abundant beauty and the scenery is ever-changing. I loved the autumn leaves so much that my host sister framed them for me to take home. She went out of her way to make my experience there amazing, introducing me to all things Canadian and her own Ukrainian culture. We still keep in touch.

My experience with Rotary was equally unforgettable. I remember speaking at a Rotary Youth Leadership Awards event to a full house of Rotarians. I was so nervous, but the reception was so warm that the words practically flew out of my mouth. Every time I feel a little afraid, I think back to how I was able to speak to that full house.

### Things had changed

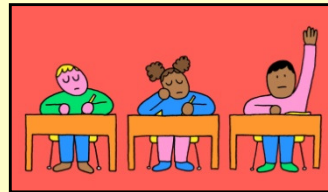
I was a little anxious to return home. I had developed a routine in Canada and loved all my host families. But when I did, I discovered things had changed. I was drawn to a different kind of friend. My view of the world had expanded. And I know the time in Canada prepared me for the next step in my life.

A little more than a year ago, I moved to China to work as an English as a Second Language teacher. My youth exchange year taught me how to appreciate cultures that were different from my own. And I can move fearlessly in the world because I know that as a member of the Rotary family, I have family everywhere.

It is a privilege to be associated with Rotary and to know that I can continue to help people around the world. I encourage anyone who has a chance to apply for a Rotary Youth Exchange. If accepted, you will never be the same again.

## How to help kids learn Critical thinking

By Mary Halton on Apr 24, 2019 in IDEAS.TED.COM



Jordan Awan

We all want the young people in our lives to thrive, but there's no clear consensus about what will best set them on the path to future success. Should every child be taught to code? Attain fluency in Mandarin, Spanish, Hindi and English?

Those are great, but they're not enough, says educator and teacher trainer **Brian Oshiro**. If we want our children to have flexible minds that can readily absorb new information and respond to complex problems, he says, we need to develop their critical thinking skills.

"We need to give students an opportunity to grapple with questions that don't necessarily have one correct answer. This is realistic of the situations that they would face when they get outside the classroom."

We can encourage kids to think critically from an early age through an activity that every child is already an expert at: **asking questions**

### 1. Go beyond "what?" and ask "how?" and "why?"

Let's say your child is learning about climate change in school. Their teacher may ask them a question like "What are main causes of climate change?" **Oshiro** says there are two problems with this question. It can be answered with a web search, and being able to answer make them feel wrongly that they know a topic. Instead prompt your kid to answer "How exactly does X cause climate change?" and "Why should we worry about it?" To answer, he'll need to go beyond bare facts and think about a subject.

Other great questions: "How will climate change affect where we live?" or "Why should our town worry about climate change?" Localizing questions gives kids, says **Oshiro**, "an opportunity to connect their knowledge to something personal in their lives."

### 2. Follow it up with "How do you know this?"

**Oshiro** says, "They have to provide some sort of evidence and be able to defend their answer against some logical attack." Answering this question requires kids to reflect on their previous statements and assess where they're getting their information from.

### 3. Let them think about how their viewpoint may differ from others.

Ask a question like "How will climate change affect people living in X country or X city?" or "Why should people living in X country or X city worry about it?" Kids will be pushed to think about the priorities and concerns of others, says **Oshiro**, and to try to understand their perspectives, essential elements of creative problem-solving.

### 4. Finally, ask them how to solve this problem.

But be sure to focus the question. For example, rather than ask "How can we solve climate change?" which is too big for anyone to wrap their mind around, ask "How could we address and solve cause X of climate change?" Answering this question will require kids to synthesize their knowledge. Nudge them to come up with a variety of approaches: What scientific solution could address cause X? What's a financial solution? What could be a political solution?

You can start this project anytime on any topic; you don't have to be an expert what your kids are studying. This is about teaching them to think for themselves. Your role is to direct their questions and listen critically. Meanwhile, your kids "have to think about how they're going to put this into digestible pieces for you to understand it. It's a great way to consolidate learning."

Critical thinking isn't just for the young, of course. **Oshiro** says, "If you're a lifelong learner, ask yourself these types of questions in order to test your assumptions about what you think you already know." As he says, "**We can all improve and support critical thinking by asking a few extra questions each day.**"

## Birthdays of Rotary members in April, 2019

Uttam Ganguli, past Governor on April 2, 2019

Debashis Mitra, past Governor on April 21, 2019

Vijay S Bhandari, past Governor on April 27, 2019

April is Maternal and Child Health Month.